



## ***Training Day***

The US Embassy Narcotics Affairs Section (NAS) and Personnel Recovery Coordination Center (PRCC) conducted joint training at Aviation Support Unit (ASU) and Mariscal Zavala Military base on Tuesday, March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2012. The event was organized in close coordination with the PRCC Director, Mr. Javier Fernandez, and incorporated USAF Survival Instructors who participated as part of their own training certification. Instruction included basic survival skill and land navigation to members of the NAS sponsored Lobos (ASU Quick Reaction Force), and shallow water egress training for the aircrew members of the ASU in preparation for the upcoming deployment to Honduras. In addition to training 16 members of the Lobos, as well as 22 pilots, the ASU continued the Helicopter Gunnery training of 12 Honduran Police and Air Force officers. The training completed demonstrates what can be accomplished with our partner nations with a little bit of planning and cross cultural communication.

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Members of the USAF Survival School provide shallow water egress training to Guatemalan Aircrew members in preparation for the upcoming deployment to Honduras. The training is designed to enable crew members to escape from a submerged cockpit after ditching in shallow water. Crew members are first shown how to release themselves from their safety harness and escape the wreckage before it sinks and includes blindfolded and disorientation repetitions.



The Lobos, members of the NAS sponsored Quick Reaction Force, and partner unit to the ASU, receive academic instruction from USAF Survival Instructors at the Aviation Support Unit facilities. The classroom instruction (in Spanish) established the foundation for basic survival skills which will be developed over a three day field exercise at Mariscal Zavala.

Members of the Department of State Air Wing conduct gunnery academic training with 12 Honduran Police and Air Forces officers. The course is a demanding 30 day program of instruction which rates the officers as crew members in the UH11 helicopter and certifies them as Helicopter gunners. Like the organization of the FRIA or *Fuerza Regional de Interdicción Aérea* (Regional Aviation Interdiction Force), which



is composed of Honduran gunners and Guatemalan pilots, the instructors come from Air Wing programs across Latin America to include Bolivia, Peru, and Colombia. This concept to pool resources in economy of force operations will build regional cooperation against the emerging narcotics trafficking threat that is seriously affecting the region.